

The Quill

OF • SIGMA • DELTA • CHI

Journalism Tomorrow---Profession or Business?

*William P. Beazell Says the Answer Lies With the Men
Who Serve the Press Today*

A Press Agent Replies

*Edward R. Egger Denies the Charge That Publicity Men
Are Renegades to Journalism*



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Newspaper Work and Writing

More Comments on Whether the City Room Helps or Hinders in Creating Literature

IS newspaper work good training for the man who wants to produce literature? Or is the city room "the slaughterhouse of the two forces that work together to make literature—creative imagination and the feeling for technique," as **Stephen H. Pollinger**, veteran reporter, charged in *THE QUILL* for last October?

Last month half a score of the country's leading writers, men who started their careers on newspapers, talked back at Mr. Pollinger. One, **Sinclair Lewis**, said that he was right, but others accused him of talking nonsense. Among the attackers were **Clarence Budington Kelland** and **G. D. Eaton**, editor of *Plain Talk*, while those who partly disagreed included **Harry Hansen**, **Irvin S. Cobb**, **Burton Rascoe**, **Franklin P. Adams**, **H. L. Mencken**, **Henry Justin Smith**, **Will Irwin**, and **William Allen White**. This last group objected to generalizing too broadly on the question, pointing out in one way or another that different persons respond differently to the same stimuli, and that all newspaper offices are not cut out on the same pattern.

Now come four other writers queried by *THE QUILL* to add their opinions to those already set down. Last month two general points stood out clearly: the men questioned said that newspaper work itself often results in literature, and that city room experience is helpful to some men and harmful to others.

There is further adverse criticism of Mr. Pollinger's article in the expressions that follow. These men, too, seem to consider newspaper work a good pre-writing course. But one of them, **William Dudley Pelley**, (editor and publisher of *The Philosopher*; *Chicopee, Mass., Journal*; *Wilmington, Vt., Times*; *St. Johnsbury Caledonian*; and author of "The Greater Glory," "The Fog," "Golden Rubbish," "Drag," and short stories and screen dramas as well) thinks there is a difference between writing a best-seller and creating literary art. Mr. Pollinger, it will be remembered, was talking about literature. Says Mr. Pelley:

"Myself an ex-newspaper man and editor, I find it difficult to hold an unbiased opinion in the matter, for I had all my training in this field, starting with small contributions for the back page and working, in Chinese fashion, from the back to the front. My constant writing practice, added to my growing understanding of what the public needs, laid the psychological foundation for my short stories, and I broke into the magazine field, following later with full length novels. This may be termed 'growth' or 'development,' and yet I hold other ideas on the subject.

"It seems to me that the real crux of your question will probably be evaded by many. For does there not exist an invisible but mighty difference between the reporter who aspires some day to be a 'best-seller' and the man with the artist's inborn capacity and convictions? I am thinking of a man whose literary talent is genuine, though as yet undeveloped, who considers his work from the standpoint of enduring quality

and social importance, who strives for either a new form of language and expression or who has studied thoroughly the harmonious and noble forms of the classic styles, and who builds within it a structure of pure form and simple lines—a temple wherein he wants to meet his readers face to face.

"Such an artist, such a Tolstoy, Proust, or Joyce would be hurt by commercial writing, for it usually tends towards the level where it can be understood by the mass-reader and he has, accordingly, to put himself on that same level. I think a sensitive writer would suffer from it mentally, in the same degree that a gifted musician who seeks inspiration in the work of the great composers would cringe to play Jazz in the public dance hall of an amusement park, or the sculptor or painter who has to prostitute his sense of form and plastic interpretation or feeling for color in order to turn out statuettes for the Decorating Trade or draw covers for a popular magazine.

"But, as Voltaire said: 'Every rule has its exception, even this one,' which goes to prove that a reporter may turn out to be a splendid novelist and may contribute worthily—yet too much reporting may paralyze his wings, making them seem to be clipped."

Ben Ames Williams (newspaper writer from his graduation from Dartmouth in 1910 until 1916, and author of "All the Brothers Were Valiant," "Black Pawl," "Immortal Longings," "Splendor," and many other novels) considers that newspaper work adds to facility, but adds that it is impossible to generalize concerning the value of newspaper experience. He says:

"In brief, I think that a man who intends to become a writer of fiction can acquire facility by newspaper work. And if he has the good sense to seek to improve his style of writing at the same time, this facility is an advantage to him. I don't think you can say anything in general about the advantages or disadvantages of the experience he may acquire in the newspaper business."

Lowell Thomas (reporter and editor of various newspapers at Cripple Creek, Colo., in his early career, and later reporter for the *Chicago Journal* until 1914; lecturer, world traveler, associate editor of *Asia*; and author of "With Lawrence in Arabia," "The First World Flight," "The Sea Devil," and other books) denies that newspaper work chokes the imaginative faculty. Quoting from his letter:

"In my wanderings up and down the planet I have encountered hundreds of writers, and I believe that more than half of the successful ones got their start as newspaper men. Two names jump to my mind right off the reel, Kipling and Mark Twain. I doubt if anyone ever charged them with lack of imagination. I have crossed their trails many times, and that is why I happen to mention them in particular. I could put down a long list of writers whom I ran across during the War, such as Sir Philip Gibbs,

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NUMBER 2

"Journalism Had Done Its Work—"

How "Bell of the *Daily News*" Set the Stage for the
London Peace Conference

By EDWARD T. INGLE

Associate Professor of Journalism, University of Florida

TWO acts of the MacDonald-Hoover play have been presented. . . . A world audience waits impatiently for the third and final act—the London conference. . . . First-nighters callous to ordinary performances have been soundly astonished. . . . Those who wagged heads when the play began have joined in the almost universal applause. . . . America and England seated arm in arm in orchestra seats are plainly enthusiastic. . . . In the galleries the rest of the world buzzes with excitement.

* * *

The interlude gives opportunity for sketching the events that led to the writing of this amazing epic in internationalism.

When Mr. Hoover took up his presidential duties the world was casting ugly glances United Statesward. "War debts," "reparations," "tariff" were dangerous words. None could employ their use without caution. In fact, Europeans, not to mention South Americans, were speaking harshly of Uncle Sam over back fences.

The British and the French were saying to Americans—openly:

"You Americans are braggarts."

"You are rich and we are poor."

"You come to Europe to flaunt your dollars."

"Why tell us America won the war?"

These were but a few of the uncomplimentary remarks being hurled at American travelers in many capitals. England was especially bitter. Proud John Bull was determined to pay every dollar of his staggering war bill. No cancellation for him! That would be humiliating. He would pay if it killed him. Never-

theless, the load was daily growing more intolerable. The spectacle of America fattening on the very phrases of Wilsonianism was galling to many Europeans.

That British feeling was running high was known in London, Ottawa, and Washington, so that government heads were becoming anxious, diplomatists dismayed by the rising tide of ill-will. The situation, admittedly bad, was getting no better. As early as January 2 of 1929, even when Mr. Hoover was still President-elect, he had rather openly expressed concern over the growing wave of anti-Americanism apparent in many places. The Great Engineer was speeding homeward from his South American adventure. The U. S. S. *Utah* was nearing Cape Hatteras and Hampton Roads. All on board were anxious for the home-coming. Not a single mishap had marred the journey. It was an ideal day. Mr. Hoover was walking on deck. Every one seemed happy, yet the future chief executive wore a troubled look. He approached a slight figure seated on a hatch cover in the sun. The lithe, lambent-featured man moved over and Mr. Hoover sat down.

"Bell," said the President-to-be, "what do you think of the British-American situation?"

Pausing, Edward Price Bell, distinguished correspondent of the *Chicago Daily News* said thoughtfully:

"I think it is bad."

"Have you considered at all the problem of making it better?" Mr. Hoover asked. (I have quoted the conversation verbatim from Mr. Bell's own account for his newspaper of October 2, 1929.)

Mr. Bell then explained to Mr. Hoover that he had intended going to England on a "mission of inquiry" at the time the President-elect announced his decision

to tour the Latin-American countries, and that he had delayed his own trip abroad in order to be one of the correspondents accompanying the new chief on his good-will venture.

The conversation continued.

"I wish you would carry out that intended mission," said the President-elect.

"Have you some idea of what can be done?" replied Bell.

"No," said Hoover. "The task seems to be one for a newspaper. The facts are obscure. Sentiment is not what it ought to be. We have the wrong atmosphere. Statesmanship cannot work constructively in such a condition of public opinion. That is the problem—to change public opinion. I think only the press can do it."

Mr. Bell's keen eyes narrowed. He quickly caught Mr. Hoover's meaning. Here was really constructive work for journalists on both sides of the Atlantic. British and American newspapers *ought to do something!* Accepting the challenge, he arose and went to his quarters. He made notes and prepared confidential dispatches for his editors. And, as he worked that bright January day on board the *Utah*, his face glowed with the excitement that comes to every true newspaper man when he suddenly senses his "story" in the making.

Later Mr. Hoover invited Mr. Walter A. Strong, publisher of the *Daily News*, to Washington. What they said to one another has not been revealed. But Bell had many conferences with his editor-in-chief, Mr. Charles Henry Dennis. Mr. Dennis was of the opinion that Mr. Bell should without delay make inquiries in England. He told the veteran writer and subsequently wrote in an editorial for his newspaper that the inquiries should be "intensive" and should cover "every phase of the unhappy estrangement between the world's two greatest and most powerful nations."

A few days later Mr. Bell was conversing with Prime Minister MacKenzie King in Ottawa. Mr. King, a Canadian of rare judgment and breadth, expressed a whole-hearted sympathy with the Bell viewpoint.

From Ottawa Mr. Bell went again to Washington and found Mr. Hoover (then President, March 21, 1929) still greatly concerned with the question of Anglo-American accord.

JUST a week later Bell was aboard the *Ile de France* en route to England. Luckily for him former Secretary of State Kellogg was also a passenger. The

veteran diplomatist of the Coolidge regime was bound for Paris to sit for a portrait. As a former ambassador to the Court of St. James, and a staunch exponent of English-speaking unity, Kellogg gave for the first time in his long public career a newspaper interview.

"What induced him to talk on this rough voyage?" wrote Bell for the *Daily News*. "His sense of the urgency of harmonizing British-American relations. He was not alarmed about them. He did not think there was any probability of war. But he saw that the situation not only was disagreeable but involved elements of latent danger. A drastic clearing of the air in the English-speaking world was about the most desirable thing, as Mr. Kellogg saw it, in international politics."

Like Mr. Hoover, Mr. Kellogg believed the job of "clearing the air of suspicion" was one for the press. He told Mr. Bell as much before he left the ship at Cherbourg.

" . . . inquiry and study, particularly with a good-will press on both sides, should dissipate this suspicion and clear the way, not only for a naval settlement, but for a new era of healthy sentiment in the English-speaking world. These great issues depend mainly upon the press. As the multilateral peace pact was borne to triumph . . . by the public opinion of the world, so public opinion can terminate Anglo-American ill-will and international ill-will in general. And public opinion, in its turn, owes its color and quality largely to the press."

Once in England, Mr. Bell was on familiar ground. He had served the *Daily News* with distinction there as correspondent and finally as dean of the newspaper's foreign staff. Among the many journalists with whom he was known and respected was "Garvin of the *Observer*." (J. L. Garvin is not only an eminent journalist but the editor-in-chief of the *Encyclopaedia Britannica*.) Bell speaks of Mr. Garvin as "the Edmund Burke of our time—a great pro-Britain, a great pro-American, and a passionate friend of humanity as a whole."

Mr. Bell went to lunch with Mr. Garvin. Assuring the able British editor of the sincerity of his mission, Bell won a great point in his cause when Garvin enthusiastically said: "The *Observer* is open to you to say anything you please about the President and about the affairs of our two countries. Every ounce of the weight of my paper is at your disposal for the purpose of your mission."

Thus began the campaign that was waged with great skill and unrelenting zeal by two great jour-

nalists—one an American and the other a Briton—to help restore the confidence and esteem of England for America.

How well the daring plan succeeded can be drawn from a perusal of the tributes poured in upon the lone American by British editors. From Cape Town to Cardiff and from Stornoway to Sydney enthusiastic comment rolled in to the *Observer* office. "Hoover and Hope," Mr. Garvin's fiery editorial of April 28, says Mr. Bell in his own account of his journalistic achievement, "swept not only the British but the whole European press. It created a sensation of the first magnitude because it gave to all Europe a more auspicious picture of the new chief executive of the United States."

YET all was not smooth sailing. Many British readers resented Mr. Bell's appeals and explanations. They told him frankly that English people were offended at American empiricism. They said Britons were plainly suspicious of American motives, be they ever so high-sounding. At that it wasn't easy for some Europeans to look past the war debt bugaboo and vision Uncle Sam in peace robes. Might not the olive branch be a foil? Europeans had come to suspect those who talked blandly of peace. But, with supreme tact and swift decision, Mr. Bell answered in the columns of the *Observer* all British objections. He spoke plainly but courteously. As evidence that the campaign did succeed his London friends point to the 1,500 replies received from the *Observer* editorials and articles; and the majority of the comments were warmly favorable.

But a still more dramatic thing happened to bring the whole effort to a brilliant climax and helped make the victory final and beyond question. President Hoover, through Hugh Gibson, his Brussels ambassador, lifted at Geneva "a ringing call for 'drastic naval reductions' and for an organization of the world in a

spirit of international friendship and trust," said Mr. Bell in a dispatch to his paper in America. The Gibson speech had an electrifying effect. "(It) reenforced what already had been done in Great Britain (and by repercussion throughout the British commonwealth), this speech had conclusive results. The net effect was that the tidal wave of British hostility to America broke to pieces before one's eyes. Talk of trouble ceased," said Bell.

So far so good. Public opinion had been "changed." Sentiment was beginning to be what it should be. The atmosphere was now

right for the accomplishment of the great mission.

"What should be the next step?" Mr. Bell asked.

"I sat down in my room at the Carlton hotel and wrote a brief note to Stanley Baldwin, then prime minister, asking him if he would be good enough to see me for a little chat. Sir Robert Vansittart, under-secretary of state for foreign affairs and principal private secretary to the prime minister, replied within twenty-four hours that Mr. Baldwin would be happy to see me in his room at the House of Commons on the afternoon of May 2 at four o'clock.

"I made the appointment punctually and was admitted to the prime minister's room with scarcely a moment's delay. We talked alone for forty minutes. Mr. Baldwin smoked his pipe industriously and smiled a great deal, but he

was very earnest. It was plain to be seen that the British-American situation had been much on his conscience. He suddenly leaned toward me and said:

" 'I would do anything to put it right.' "

"It was at this instant that an idea which had been knocking about in my reflections for some time took definite form.

" 'Mr. Prime Minister,' I said, 'I wish you would come to Washington for a heart-to-heart conversation or series of conversations with President Hoover. I can think of nothing that seems to be fraught with

(Continued on page 18)



Next Month's Quill

**Will Be a 20-Page Magazine
Crammed From Cover to Cover
With Articles Worth Reading.**

A Few of Them Are

**An article on the equipment a
country journalist needs (crowd-
ed out of this issue), by Franklin
M. Reck.**

**An article on making a style
book, by Frank W. McDonough,
who has made one.**

**An article on what Indiana news-
paper men are doing for better
contempt laws, by one of them.**

IN MARCH

News, the Great Incentive

Revealing the Immense Power It Exerts on Human Conduct

By WALTER W. R. MAY

WILLAMETTE UNIVERSITY came into existence as the result of a well written, although perhaps slightly inaccurate, news item in the *Christian Advocate and Journal* of New York, and *Zion's Herald* of Boston, in March, 1833. This news item stirred religious interest in the Flatheads and other Indians then inhabiting the Oregon country, and resulted in the first missionary expedition west of the Rocky Mountains.

That is why I have chosen for my subject, "News—the Great Incentive."

In printing a spirited account of the need of spiritual guidance for the Indians of the Oregon country, the *Christian Advocate and Journal* may have erred and exaggerated as modern newspapers do so often when they undertake to bring to the public the intelligence that ultimately brings progress and order. But it fired the imagination of leaders in the Methodist Church, then just a hundred years old, and galvanized them into action as nothing before had done. And Willamette University now stands as a monument, not alone to the Methodist Church, but to the writer who had the "mental urgency" and the vision to write about the thing that needed to be written about at that time.

The events leading to that article were no more dramatic than hundreds of events that find their way into the news columns of the newspapers today. The important fact, then and now, is that when the event became news, it became a great force.

Sometime in 1831 or 1832, a delegation of Indians had gone to St. Louis, having learned something of the

The Long View

Too often the commencement address is nothing more than another ordeal the near-graduate must pass through before he may claim his diploma. Yet sometimes it becomes an intellectual experience for those who hear it and the others who read the newspaper accounts next day. And occasionally, however rarely, a commencement address may so inspire and electrify an audience that its influence will be felt in the far corners of the world.

Last June an address of this last category was delivered at Willamette University by Walter W. R. May (Oregon Associate), formerly executive news editor of the Portland *Oregonian* and now city advertising manager of the paper. It was a new and illuminating treatment of an old subject, and it made such an impression on his hearers that the University authorities asked permission to reprint it in pamphlet form for distribution throughout the nation. The result was that requests for reprints came from many universities, among them the University of Berlin, which has placed the booklet in its new library of books relating to journalism.

Because Mr. May takes the long view in talking of newspapers, and because he brings to any discussion of the newspaper an unusual conception of the value of news, The Quill asked for and was given permission to condense the original address for publication in the magazine. Messages to the graduates from seventeen noted Americans, including the President and a former President, which Mr. May obtained for the graduates, have been omitted.

power and attraction of Christian civilization from the tales that were brought down from Canada by the Indians who roamed over this Western country. In their vague way, they understood that Christian civilization would bring them spiritual and material relief, and they had gone to implore the white men to bring to the Indians something of this relief.

In due time, G. P. Dishoway learned of their coming and of their story, and wrote this now historic letter and news item telling of the plight of these Far Western Indians, particularly those in the Oregon country. Within three weeks after publication of the article, Dr. Wilbur Fisk, president of Wilbraham Academy at Wilbraham, Massachusetts, had

called his mission board into service of a new and thrilling nature. And within a few months, the young and intrepid Jason Lee, but recently ordained into the ministry, had been chosen to lead the first missionary expedition into Oregon; three thousand dollars had been appropriated for the work; and a noteworthy farewell for him had been held in New York City. These events became news and as such they became the incentive for action.

The United States Government, up to that time, had felt neither inclination nor the capacity to foster Christian civilization in this section of the country; and upon the first publication of this news of the plight of the Western American Indian, the Government was not alarmed—and some historians will tell you it was scarcely interested. But in good time that news item forced government participation in the great work—as a thousand times since great

bodies have been moved by a few lines of type.

You have but to stir your recollection to recall the many times within recent years when local, state, and national governments, or other organized forces, have felt neither the inclination nor the capacity to do something that needed doing until inspired or urged into action by a passing newspaper article, written by some writer or editor who had the "mental urgency" or the spiritual energy to recognize news in the events that concern the great body known as the public.

In matters of more recent moment we may find the inspiration and the incentive for steps of progress in the news item, as it is typified in the average modern newspaper; and the good work of the more righteous and self-respecting newspapers, as a group, will more than offset the damaging consequences of the over-zealous and less righteous newspapers, as a group.

I believe it is unimportant that the original purpose of the Jason Lee expedition was never fully and satisfactorily realized; unimportant whether the Indians or the scattered white settlers more needed the ministrations of the missionaries; and beside the point whether the work might have been better done had action been based on a more accurate and less emotional report of the country's needs. It is sufficient, in my mind, that Mr. Dishoway's account of the Flathead Indians' plight was the great incentive that sent the missionaries and educators into action; caused first the establishment of a school for the Indians, which accomplished little; placed the political aspect of the Oregon movement squarely before the American Congress and the world; brought into being a school for white settlers to be known as the Oregon Institute, which ultimately, in 1844, resulted in the organized work that for eighty-five years has been the proud honor and responsibility of what we now know as Willamette University.

Just as G. P. Dishoway died, knowing only that his pen had mobilized the great Methodist Church for the worthiest undertaking of its career, so today every serious-minded news writer knows that behind some item in the day's news there is the force to conquer new and unrevealed worlds, the zeal to right some human wrong, or the inspiration to solve some social or economic problem.

It is desirable sometimes to stand off at distance and contemplate the work of other men.

When I look at the legal profession from this perspective, I am not so apt to see in it only the verbiage of a legal document, a verbiage that to many of us

seems unnecessary; I am not so apt to see only the ambulance-chasing lawyer, or the shrewd reasoner who halts the progress of a nation by the bugaboo of a technicality.

When I look at the medical profession from this perspective, I am not so apt to see only the malpractice of a novice, or the lack of a technique that occasionally means death, or even the inconsistencies of an archaic code of ethics.

When I look at the field of science from this perspective, I am not so apt to see only the vain striving after something new, nor the black art that brings poison gases into warfare, nor the charlatan who preys upon the ignorant and the illiterate.

But when from this perspective I look at the legal profession, I see institutions like the American Constitution or the Courts of Equity, and the treaties of peace or the international pacts for commercial activity. From this perspective, I see the medical profession as a great charitable institution; as a relatively precise organization for the mitigation of human pain and misery. The realm of science looms up to me from this perspective as the magic workshop that has brought into creation a thousand remedies for human dereliction, and a thousand conveniences to make life happier and more worth while—the radio, the telephone, the drugs and serums that wipe out pestilence and rout deadly germs. I comprehend also the romantic processes that enable us to send photographs spinning along a telephone wire or through the ether, to be reproduced at the other end of the world in a few moments with a faithfulness and accuracy that in any other age but this would seem miraculous.

It is from this perspective that I would bid you see the modern newspaper. Not alone as the chronicle of petty crime, the panorama of loose living and frivolous thinking; not alone as a huge comic sheet of debatable entertainment for young and old. But as the institution that enables a young and intrepid Paul Anderson, whose "mental urgency" is the inspiration of every newspaper, to bring to light the real significance of the Fall-Sinclair so-called conspiracy; that enabled another intrepid writer, Jacob Riis, to start a movement, later taken up by Theodore Roosevelt when Police Commissioner of New York City, to wipe out in some measure the misery and oppression of the lower East Side of New York; as an institution that turned a thousand minds to the study of radio, the X-ray, international peace and the making of paper from wood.

When you look at the modern newspaper from this perspective, you will not see it only as a cup overflow-

ing with the froth of human relations, but as an institution that probably above any other has brought civic probity into the affairs of the state and the nation, when graft and greed were about to engulf them.

You will see it from this perspective as a force that more than any other, scattered the old Tammany ring in New York City, and as an influence that works among all parties of political thought to keep them conscious of the fact that they exist by serving the people, and not by the rights of appropriation.

The modern newspaper is, whether you like it or not, great and powerful, with sinews toughened because it is an active force and unrelenting in its endeavors—ever young in its ideals and aspirations. It should be utilized by the public because it exists for and by it. A public uninterested in its newspapers is a public paralyzed with apathy in all matters that relate to human progress.

I maintain that news, as we understand it in the modern newspaper, is the spark that fires men's imagination to scientific research, to experiments in the social sciences, to all forms of literary endeavor, to new ruminations on unsolved problems of every description, and, above all, news feeds that hunger in the human breast for those tidbits of knowledge concerning other human beings, without which our minds and hearts would atrophy. News is the great incentive to human life, second only to the quest for the secret of immortality—and that in itself is news.

The news does not just happen. It does not find its way into the column of the daily newspaper without a good measure of faithfulness, anticipation, and energy. News comes so regularly to the doorstep each morning that one may be pardoned for overlooking the fact that behind almost every item is a definite amount of work—just as definite as the work that enables the student to solve a problem in geometry or algebra, or a student in law or philosophy to arrive at some conclusion in logic.

Before a newspaper can expose the political corruption in a community, before a newspaper can tell of some outstanding step in science, or before it can reveal some intellectual light that has long been hidden under a bushel, or brighten the day with an anecdote or foible from the councils of the great and near great, someone has had to risk his life, put aside the temptations of fortune, subdue his personal inclination, or challenge his energy and imagination. It may be that before some of these

things can be revealed, some editor or writer has let his intellect play with the prospects of a situation, or had delved far back into history, laboriously looking up records and reflecting on the weaknesses of men; or has sent an energetic reporter through many hurried and harried steps that he might get the initials and the spelling of a name correct. Even so, conflicting forces may half the time obstruct his way.

But when these facts are finally marshaled into what is known as the news item, they are quite apt to be the touchstone to another step in human progress.

That is why, in my opinion, it is a service to charge the men and women who are leaving the universities today with the responsibility they owe to themselves and to the world at large to make use of this thing called "news." It is not a satisfactory answer that by having four or six years of college the individual graduate has lifted himself above the need for news. It is not a satisfactory answer that the news is written for the man on the street. Every plot and every story that you will find in the classics of standard literature of this or any other age will find its counterpart in the news in the average daily newspaper—romance, hardship, violence, love of country, love of man for woman, adventure and natural disaster. All these things that go to make up literary history from the beginning of the world, make the literature of the day's news. The difference is only in the manner of treatment, and although the modern newspaper is recognized as a great business institution and essentially a chronicle of events, it lives in the full knowledge that it is more than that, for it is also a semi-public utility, and as such exists to serve the public, fire its imagination, steel it into action, and to lure it upon the great constructive adventures of the day.

He "Took the High Way"

FEW who heard Dean Walter Williams' tribute to Ward A. Neff at the Missouri Convention will ever forget its eloquence or sincerity. If we could rekindle the spirit of it here, we should deem it a privilege to publish the text in full. But the task is beyond us.

The Missouri meeting was itself a tribute to Ward Neff. The chapter he helped to found acted as hosts. Dean Williams, his close personal friend, welcomed the delegates. The sessions were held in Jay H. Neff Hall, which he gave to the university in memory of his publisher father. The very soundness and health of Sigma Delta Chi, bore witness to his influence.



A Press Agent Replies

Taking Exception to the View that Publicity Men Are Renegades of the Journalistic Profession

By EDWARD R. EGGER

PUBLICITY men for great corporations call themselves public relations experts, but in the newspaper office they are known as just common press agents."

"The newspaper profession is in great danger from the press agent. The great corporations don't constitute an ethical society, nor have they any compunctions about the methods used in getting over their views to the public."

"The purpose of a newspaper is to perform some great, useful and unselfish public service. It has come to the point in our office where we are more afraid of the press agent than the drunken automobile driver."

"Press agents are the renegades of our profession. We should run them out!"

THE above statements, taken from the Associated Press report of a speech made by Clark McAdams, editor of the editorial page of the St. Louis *Post-Dispatch*, on "The Press and the Press Agent" before the Fifteenth Convention of Sigma Delta Chi at the University of Missouri, constitute the most unfair and misleading condemnation of an entire branch of the journalistic profession that has so far come to my attention.

They are unfair because of their sweeping generality. Misleading because they are not backed by facts. Mr. McAdams' attack was predicated on the activities of one man who has assumed national prominence in publicity work—and a general statement as to his own experience with so-called "press agents."

But does a single "horrible example," or the experience of one man, warrant wholesale condemnation of an entire class? It is just as logical to brand all editors as unscrupulous because a few color the news to suit their own purposes or suppress certain choice bits of scandal for fear of harming the reputations of big advertisers. Just as fair to heap coals of contempt upon the heads of all clergymen because one runs off with

the organist or another embezzles church funds.

As Karl A. Bickel, president of the United Press Association, said immediately after the excoriation delivered by Mr. McAdams, you cannot draw a sharp line between any two groups of men in a profession and proceed to brand one group as "renegades" and hold up the other as saints. Human frailty and the character of the individual, rather than the profession itself, are the factors that determine the intrinsic worth of any person, whatever his calling.

Mr. McAdams was justified in ostracizing a certain class of "press agents." That goes without saying. We who are following this line of endeavor ourselves condemn the unscrupulous publicity man whose aim is to put over on the city editor a concoction of unmitigated bunk or a pure fabrication. But we who are hewing to the line of high ethics in accuracy and honesty are just as emphatic in resenting the general appellation "renegades of our profession."

It might be illuminating to Mr. McAdams to learn that a large and rapidly increasing number of graduates of schools of journalism are either already engaged in or are entering publicity work. Further, he might be surprised to know that some of the men who are teaching in our schools of journalism today are doing publicity work of some sort.

If Mr. McAdams doubts that this is true, let him scan the notes, "With Sigma Delta Chi Afield," in *THE QUILL*. The fraternity, as every one knows, aims to pick its members from the most promising students of journalism wherever it has chapters. Here are a few of the occupations listed, which would surely make the men in question "renegades of our

From Both Sides

Edward R. Egger, whose article on this page voices strenuous objection to the proposal that publicity men should be considered "renegades of the journalistic profession," can point to a background of newspaper experience that demands consideration for what he has to say. There is reason to believe that he can see the question of the place of the press agent from both sides of the fence.

Mr. Egger started in journalism as a reporter on his home town paper in Centralia, Illinois, a year before he entered the School of Journalism at the University of Missouri. After his discharge from the Army, he was with the St. Louis *Globe-Democrat* for several months, leaving to join the staff of the *Illinois State Journal* at Springfield. After two years here he was sent to Japan by Dean Walter Williams, of the Missouri School of Journalism, to serve on the staff of the *Japan Advertiser*. There he became correspondent for the *Chicago Daily News* and for Central News, Ltd., of London. He also represented several picture agencies. He covered the great earthquake, among other assignments, returning to the United States after three years by way of Asia and Europe.

On his return he covered a session of the Illinois State Legislature for the Illinois Manufacturers Association. In 1925 he became Assistant Publicity Manager of the Chicago Rapid Transit Company (operating the Chicago elevated lines) and the Chicago North Shore & Milwaukee Railroad (an electric interurban line). His job, in addition to representing his principals in their contacts with the press, includes editing employee publications for both companies as well as a publication for customers of the two lines, and also the writing of articles for magazines and of speeches for officials.

Journalism Tomorrow

The Answer Lies With the Men Who Write

By WILLIAM P. FLETCHER

I HAVE been under rather sharp attack recently as being, somehow, a renegade for having said I thought running a newspaper had become a business rather than a profession. I don't quite see why that term should be, of itself, a reproach, but apparently it is to some. I have been accused of being, somehow, a traitor to my calling for saying that changes in the character of newspapers were coming in keeping with this shift of emphasis to the business side. It seems to me that the first thing to do is to determine, if changes are coming, whether they are good or bad, and then to fix our position accordingly. But certainly that position ought to be fixed after the fact, not before.

I think there can be no doubt that we are at the opening of a new era in newspaper history. Some of us may live to see a newspaper quite unlike the great institution we now know; certainly our children or our grandchildren will see a very different one. Some of the agencies that will bring these changes about are already, perhaps, in operation. There is automatic composition—perhaps that will bring about a great central office where all general news, all editorials, all features, will be gathered and edited, to be punched on a tape and sent direct to typesetting machines in half a dozen, a score, a hundred—who knows?—towns and cities, even though they be continents apart. The transmission of pictures by wire and wireless is already an established factor in newspaper production; perhaps the time is not far away when newspapers, centrally produced, will be photographed a whole page at a time, transmitted by these devices, engraved and sent direct to the press without editorial intervention at the point of printing. Perhaps television may reach a quantity production basis that will make feasible the throwing of a newspaper or its equivalent on a screen in the home or the office or even in an automobile or a bus.

THESE possibilities are not so fantastic as they sound. We have already gone far along the road toward them. You know the extent to which central office editing is carried on by some of the great newspaper chains—the directions that are given, the posi-



tions that are prescribed, the editorials that are written for simultaneous publication in cities all over the country, the feature articles that are sent out complete even to the headlines, the picture services, the department leads for sports and finance, radio and the like.

Much the same sort of thing is going on in the news services. To an extent not dreamed of even a few years ago the Associated Press actually edits the papers of its members. A paper may do as it pleases with the copy of any of its own staff, the top flight man and the cub alike; A. P. copy must go "as is," and even editorial interpolations for clarification are frowned upon. News association feature services have grown astonishingly. The A. P. sends out in its feature service each week the equivalent of six pages of newspaper. The International News Service sends out each day seven columns of supplementary matter, edited and headed. The United Press in its Red Letter service sends a minimum of 30,000 words a week. These special services go into more than 2,800 offices.

Some of the smaller news services actually supply a greater volume of non-spot than of spot matter. The syndicates proper, although their number is considerably less than it was two years ago, are maintaining a steadily increasing output. It makes little difference where you go, to the big city or the little, to the near state or the far, you may be sure of getting your favorite comic strip and your favorite column; your favorite cartoon and your favorite commentator. The newspapers of the country are covered by these services as the old-time publisher used to boast that his territory was covered by his circulation, like a fall of dew. An inevitable result of this is standardization.

IT is certainly true, I think, that never were American newspapers cut so true to a single pattern as they are today. They no longer compete in content but only in form, and even in form there is coming a curious similarity among them. In dozens of our cities one newspaper differs from another only in the head letter it uses. It will have the same body type, the same news, the same pictures, the same type of features, as its competitors; by the time the last edition has come off the press it will have the same first

Profession or Business?

Men Who Serve the Press Today

WILLIAM P. BEAZELL

page and often, headline for headline, the same choice of theme or incident for emphasis.

There is another factor that contributes to standardization—the chain newspaper. There are now fifty-five chains in the United States, holding 250 newspapers with more than 14,000,000 of the 38,000,000 total circulation of the country. Altogether eighty-four cities with a population of 100,000 or more have chain newspapers and only twenty-two cities of the same class do not. Twelve cities—the smallest of them with 75,000 population and the largest with 600,000—have none but chain newspapers. The development is as striking in its scope as in its size. To a peculiar degree a newspaper reflects the personality of its ownership. We have, then, one reflection not in a single newspaper but in ten or twenty or twenty-five. Sometimes the reflection is physical—you can tell a Hearst newspaper as far as you can see it no matter what city it is published in. Sometimes it is a manifestation of policy, as in the Scripps-Howard support of Hoover regardless of the popular preference of individual clienteles. It is no unusual thing for the reflection to be entirely foreign to the community. Take Pittsburgh. It has been reduced from four morning and four evening newspapers to one morning and two evening. Paul Block owns one of these, Hearst owns one, and Scripps-Howard the third. Pittsburgh is without a newspaper owned by Pittsburghers, and is likely so to remain, for its three newspapers monopolize the three principal news services, and a tighter barrier against competition could hardly be devised.

Now, I am not saying that the standardized newspaper is a bad or a deplorable thing. Factor for factor in its content, newspaper quality was never so high as it is today. The syndicate, and, as they

are functioning nowadays, the news service, can furnish for a hundred papers material that in excellence and importance would be quite beyond the reach of any one newspaper except perhaps a few of the greatest of them all. There is true public service, often, in that. The gathering of news has been brought to a magical perfection of scope and detail. There is no longer any place in the wide, wide world that is not a date line, and for news that happened yesterday. There is no field of human activity and interest that is not harvested. We fare daily on matter that, twenty years ago, never found a place in newspapers. Authority in presentation and interpretation is at the highest mark that has ever been reached. Physically the advance has been pronounced, and with every laboratory of almost every science making its contribution toward newspaper production we may expect this advance to continue.

He Knows Newspapers

Some months ago William P. Beazell, author of the article on this page, said publicly that emphasis in the making of newspapers is shifting noticeably from the editorial to the business side. Immediately editors took issue with his views.

In the accompanying article Mr. Beazell answers his critics. He cites the influences at work on the press today, showing conclusively that the tendency is toward increased standardization, more and larger newspaper chains, and greater acceptance of the view that the newspaper is a property rather than a quasi-public institution.

Mr. Beazell is a graduate of Allegheny College, which has awarded him the honorary degree of Doctor of Letters. He began his career as a reporter on the *Pittsburgh Leader* in 1897, and was later reporter, night city editor, political and editorial writer, night editor, and editor of various Pittsburgh papers. In 1921 he became assistant managing editor of the *New York World*. Recently he resigned to become assistant to the chairman of the New York Saratoga Springs Commission. Since 1923 he has been associated with the School of Journalism at Columbia University.

THE newspaper of today, in every sense of the word, is the best bargain any man can buy. Regarded as a manufactured product alone it sells for less than half the cost of turning it out. The value of the information it garners from a thousand sources and lays at your doorstep or on your desk is utterly beyond calculation. I know a man in New York who gets each morning from three lines of agate type data that would cost him \$25,000 a year if he had to gather them himself. A profit of \$24,993.74 from an investment of \$6.26 is rather better than fair.

But there are shortcomings of the standardized newspaper. Often it lacks the outward and the inward evidences of individuality—of its own individuality, at least. Often it lacks vigor and initiative, and contents itself with the excellence of the things that come to it in the established course. I am not at all

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Garvin—A Newspaper's Soul

IT is one of the facts that, with only sufficient exception to prove the rule, personal journalism has moved from the editorial page to the feature and department pages. Every newspaper proclaims a hundred nobodies in its subsidiary columns, but the editorial voice of the newspaper is an impressive ghost, with whom a baffled public do vague battle as they may.

A few weeks since, at the instance of the London *Spectator*, a luncheon was given in honor of the twenty-first anniversary of J. L. Garvin's editorship of the *Observer*. It was, of course, a graceful thing to do; especially as the greatest men in Britain came to share the occasion, regardless of politics or profession. But it was a singular recognition of something that is virtually extinct. Of no other newspaper can it be said, with such complete conviction, that one man is the paper. Brisbane is not the Hearst press. But Garvin is the *Observer*; he is the soul of it—a visible, tangible, and constantly vital thing, sensitive to the changing fortunes of contemporary history and deeply, intensely absorbed in fruitful analysis of the moving age.

Mr. Garvin saw many experiences before he came to the *Observer*, where now he has reached a majority. It is something to reflect on that it was under Lord Northcliffe's ownership that the *Observer* started on its quixotic course of detachment from material obstruction; rather sceptically it was given "a soul"; it

was to be firm and direct in principles but impartial in news. A good creed. Mr. Garvin became, as it has been said, the soul. His own gospel was the precious one of professional integrity, guarded so splendidly over so many years that, at the famous luncheon, his dialectical foes could come and shower their praises on him.

His example is, and should be, significant. He proves, in his own career, that personal journalism can be effective if, as he himself says, it is steadfast to principles and, very important, properly trained. His emphasis on suitable training is interesting. It lifts him out of the great class of individual writers who just grew on to editorial desks. He urges meticulous training, but with the pregnant emphasis on the kind of teacher rather than the character of the tuition. He argues that the right kind of teacher cannot teach anything wrong that belongs to the fundamentals of the profession.

In sum, his career is a lesson in ethics, most notably exemplified for an unparalleled period, in a field that has ranged vehemently from politics to paleography, from war to wainscoting. And in all that sweeping flood of argument, decision, opinion, and challenge, none is found to question the integrity of the writer nor the helpful purpose of the editor.

His career belongs to the story of journalism. Who will write it?

We'll Miss Claire Briggs

OF the making of comic strips there is no end in these days when newspapers boast of double-page spreads daily and sixteen pages in color on Sunday. Yet we feel it keenly that Claire Briggs, who died of pneumonia January 4 in New York City, will no longer make them.

Whatever defense may be offered by publishers for covering so many pages of newsprint with comics, no defense is necessary for a Briggs. He was a creative artist, if a minor one. He had a great many worth while things to say, and he managed to get them said in a way that millions could appreciate.

Claire Briggs found pay dust in the small tragedies and triumphs of ordinary folks. He had a seeing eye, and an understanding heart—and a pervasive sense of humor that somehow lightened pathos while sounding its depths, and yet made joy no less rapturous for uncovering the flimsiness of its foundation. "When a Feller Needs a Friend" and "Ain't It a Grand and Glorious Feeling" were two famous series cut from such stout stuff.

Divorcee must be less an evil because of Claire Briggs

and his "Mr. and Mrs." Here he exposed without mercy the petty annoyances of married life, but he did it with a kindly wink that made thousands grin as they grimaced. Through his eyes they saw a funny side even in their own heartbreaks. Always his chuckling was a refreshing breeze, which did its purifying work even when it was unexpected and unwanted.

It was a good thing for all of us that Claire Briggs lived and drew black lines on white paper. It was a good thing that we smiled at his cartoons—we were the better for them. Millions of us, because of him, enjoyed more thoroughly the favors life showed us and laughed at the buffets that he made unimportant.

A sympathetic, gay, and dauntless spirit—that was Claire Briggs. We (and we hope for everybody's sake that we speak for all of us) are going to miss him.

Practical Publicists

A FORMER President of the United States and a former candidate for the office engaged in a brief debate the other day over a question of publicity. And while they argued gently, a merchant prince sat by and said nothing.

It happened in the board room of a New York bank, where Calvin Coolidge, Alfred E. Smith, and Julius Rosenwald met as trustees of the estate of Conrad Hubert, inventor. It is their responsibility to distribute the \$6,000,000 in their care among Protestant, Catholic, and Jewish charities. The discussion concerned whether a preliminary report should be given immediate publicity.

Mr. Coolidge favored releasing the report at once. Mr. Smith demurred, saying that to make it public on a Saturday would deny it the front page in the papers and place away back "next to O'Sullivan's heels." His point did not sway Mr. Coolidge, and the report was released.

It is difficult to see Mr. Coolidge's viewpoint. If he wanted the public to know what had been done and if he wanted the greatest possible notice for the estate, then he should have accepted Mr. Smith's suggestion. From a strict standpoint, possibly, a report should be made public when it is ready, but a good case can be made for releasing news at the most favorable time.

Maybe Mr. Coolidge thought that a former-President ought not to truckle to practical considerations in this instance. Or possibly he realized that a small difference of opinion with Mr. Smith would get even more publicity than a report released on a Monday. Or it may have been that that was Mr. Smith's idea.

Anyhow, it made a good story.

The Book Beat

Beating the Censors

YOU CAN'T PRINT THAT, by George Seldes. Payson and Clarke, Ltd., New York. 1929. \$4.00.

Reviewed by MITCHELL V. CHARNLEY.

"You can't print that," said Mussolini when American newspaper correspondents learned the truth of the Matteotti murder in Italy in 1924. George Seldes printed it and was deported.

"You can't print that," said Bratianu's police when Seldes sent a cable describing plans for a big oil graft in Roumania. Seldes re-sent it by mail, and got out of the country minutes ahead of the police.

"You can't print that," said Pilsudski, d'Annunzio, Calles, Lenin. Seldes printed it—printed it because it was legitimate, important news—and made history in doing it.

The big book, fascinating from page 1 to page 465, is a revelation of the intrigue, the propaganda, the deception that has characterized international politics since the war. It is important to a newspaper man in three directions: first in its amazing tales of the adventures of foreign correspondents in getting what they are legitimately entitled to; second because it reveals an astounding network of censorship, of misleading statement, of intentional misrepresentation, of lies that have come out of Italy, Germany, France, Poland, Russia, Mexico, and Roumania—to mention outstanding instances—since 1918; and third because of the insight it gives into political backgrounds, motives and movements, and into the true characters of the Mussolinis, Pilsudskis, Hindenburgs and Lenins of European politics.

The book emphasizes the danger menacing the free dissemination of good news—the desire of anybody in a position of power to let the world know only what will help his cause. It is an amazing work, as well as a fascinating one. It is jammed with incident—Seldes' telling the world the story of the American Foreign Legionnaire, Bennett S. Doty, and thereby saving his life, is one. Incidentally, because of his part in the case, Seldes was charged by the French army with fomenting mutiny in the Legion!

Even Sinclair Lewis, who believes newspaper work has no value for the writer, calls the book "exciting . . . dramatic" and admits that Seldes is a "keen adventurer." It's swell reading.

Teachers Should Know This Text

HIGH SCHOOL REPORTING AND EDITING, by Carl G. Miller. McGraw-Hill Book Company, Inc., New York. 1929.

The author is the journalism instructor at Lewis and Clark High School, Spokane, a school whose journalistic endeavors have been extraordinarily successful. Though the book is academic, it is amazingly complete, and its aim—to give the high school student of journalistic talent not only tools with which to ply his trade in high school but also background to understand the practice and implications of adult journalism—makes it a text of which every journalism teacher should know.—M. V. C.

A Press Agent Replies

(Continued from page 9)

profession" in the eyes of our critic:

Member of the publicity staff of the General Motors Export Corporation.

Assistant director of publications for the Continental Oil Company.

Editorial assistant at the University of Wisconsin College of Agriculture—in charge of publicity releases for the college and of radio broadcasting from the university station.

Instructor of journalism, assistant director of publicity, and editor of the *Arkansas Alumnus* at the University of Arkansas.

Publicity director for Butler University.

Regional publicity director for the Chicago Aeronautical Corporation.

This list could have been much longer, but it is sufficient to illustrate how diversified are the activities of journalism graduates whom Mr. McAdams chooses to brand as unfit members of the profession of journalism. What a lot of territory he took in when he cast out publicity men as a whole! But perhaps he intended to exempt "press agents" for universities and a few other institutions from his execration. If so, he certainly refrained from drawing this fine line of distinction.

True, Mr. McAdams did take a swing at corporations. This no doubt was due to the wide-open policy on publicity now followed by large industrial concerns. But what was his attitude in the days when corporations adhered to the proverbial "public-be-damned" policy in respect to giving out information? Did he condemn this attitude as vehemently as he does the present system, under which corporations spend large sums annually to keep the public informed of their activities?

IN his talk Mr. McAdams implied that the former newspaper men now in publicity work were more or less "flops" in the newspaper game. The reverse is true. Many of the men listed above were leaders in school and had risen to positions of high trust on newspapers before they became "renegades."

But he is probably right in saying that they left their newspaper jobs because they were offered more money. Why they entered publicity work is their own personal affair, but it is likely that the monetary demands of this age of high living costs—coupled with the worthy desire to give their families the best



possible advantages in life—motivated many of them. Unlike Mr. McAdams, not all men in newspaper offices are drawing salaries fancy enough to warrant them dismissing better offers for their talents in specialized lines of journalistic work.

As to the routine tasks of the average publicity man today, I fear Mr. McAdams is either sadly misinformed or wilfully ignorant of the facts. Let him call in some young "press agent" from some large industrial concern in St. Louis and ask him about his work. He will most likely find that, in addition to sending out news releases about improvements or special activities of his company—things that in themselves constitute legitimate news in this industrial era—he is editing an employe publication, issuing informative literature for the trade, or even preparing advertising copy when the occasion requires. Would he say that any of these activities is not legitimate?

To my mind the greatest injustice done by Mr. McAdams is not the effect that his fault-finding has on those already in publicity work. We're used to the superior attitude assumed by a certain element of the press—which, by the way, is steadily decreasing in importance as the solid worth of material released by *bona fide* publicity men is increasingly emphasized.

The greatest danger of so sweeping a denunciation by publicity men and their practices is that it may have a bad effect on undergraduates in journalism. If it be true, as some say, that schools of journalism are turning out more graduates than our newspapers can readily absorb, then, instead of poisoning the minds of these students against publicity and industrial journalism, men in Mr. McAdams' capacity should urge them to seek employment in this field. Certainly it is a safeguard for journalism to have high-minded men, trained in the ethics of the profession, in publicity positions.

I say to undergraduates that publicity and industrial journalism open a new vista of opportunity. Instead of turning your backs on it because the stigma of apostasy has been placed indiscriminately on publicity men by certain journalists, consider what men already in the field have to say. To be sure, there are "renegades" among us. But those of us who are living up to our trust do not condone shady practices. Gladly we join with Mr. McAdams in condemning

them, just as we reject the offer of the editor who would print our copy on a guarantee of reciprocity in advertising. All we ask of him is that he deal in specific terms.

Publicity work as a vocation needs no defense. The very fact that almost every institution and organization with any definite purpose has an organized agency to secure publicity for it is sufficient proof that publicity men are needed. With Mr. Bickel we ask which came first, the press or the press agents; and we agree with him that as long as there are newspapers there will be publicity men.

Just a word to Mr. McAdams and newspaper executives in general: You can do our branch of the journalistic profession a great service by assuming a more discriminatory attitude toward us. When a "press agent" from some theatrical agency comes to you with a cock-and-bull story of a stage star who is a great home body—illustrated by a picture of Her Charming Personality faking the act of washing dishes, when she would not put her hands in dishwater lest she spoil the polish on her little pink finger nails—tell him the story is just plain "bunk" and throw it in the wastebasket before his eyes.

The next time some real estate publicity agent steps up to you with a story of the giant skyscraper which "certain prominent parties plan to erect on a valuable site in the near future," check on the story and then discard it if it proves a pure fabrication designed to enhance the value of surrounding property. And when the next movie star announces her fifth engagement or the loss of her jewels, cast it aside as just another publicity stunt.

But, when some *bona fide* publicity man representing a large corporation with millions invested in your community gives you a straight news item on an important improvement being made by his company, give it at least as good a play as you do the story of the arrest of some illiterate bootlegger. Or when he furnishes you an item on the faithful service of a man who has been

with his company for thirty years, see that it carries as big a head as the story about the unknown derelict who drowned himself because he was a complete failure in life. You will then be showing the constructive intelligence your readers have a right to expect of you. And, most important to us in the field of publicity, you will be hastening the day when the real "renegades of our profession" will be looking elsewhere for means of sustenance.

To the heads of our schools of journalism, I would humbly suggest that you take cognizance of the growing profession of publicity and industrial journalism, with the opportunities it offers for your increasing product of trained journalists. I know from personal experience and contacts that the executives of large institutions with publicity departments or specialized publications are turning more and more to the universities, and especially the schools of journalism, for their new employees. Certainly the least our schools can do is train their students so that they can make the most of any opportunity that may come their way.

We who are doing publicity work see no reason to hang our heads because Mr. McAdams has cast us aside. No court would convict us of the crimes he lays at our door—his indictment is too vague, and there is more than a reasonable doubt that we are guilty of them. So, still clad in the garment of innocence, we can look any journalist in the eye.

Still we regret Mr. McAdams' failure to deal with the question more thoughtfully and more constructively. We wish he had, for we know that he somehow would have managed to gain the public ear. Mr. McAdams can see a good source of publicity when he stumbles on it, as the most hot shots he aimed at press agents in the Columbia speech indicate. Anyhow, his attack got the names of both the great Pulitzer organ in St. Louis and the editor of its editorial page broadcast over the country! What press agent could do more?

Why Newspaper Men Turn Press Agent

Corporations recruit their public relations experts from newspaper staffs—often if not always. Apparently they have a stronger lure than the newspaper can claim. To find out what that lure is, *The Quill* has questioned a number of publicity men. Read their answers

In March

Journalism Tomorrow—Profession or Business?*(Continued from page 11)*

sure that the old public service newspaper has not passed from the stage. Less and less, it seems to me, the old curiosity as to what lies behind the news, the old urge to find where and how deep its roots run, exist or are yielded to. Perhaps this should not seem strange in these days when almost no paper can publish all the news that comes to it, and when many of them must throw away two words for every one that can be used. But I, for one, miss the old ways and the old papers. I find myself in the mood of the cockney woman who had just seen her first talking picture.

"I dawn't think it was so good," she said. "I like the old unspeakable ones better."

I do not believe that the standardized newspaper is entirely a result either of choice or of chance. To a very great degree it has been compelled.

OUR economic structure is being remodeled. The evidences of this are on every hand. One evidence is the swift spread of mergers outside industry and their steady increase inside industry. A vivid illustration of this trend has just been given us—272 banking chains now hold thirteen billions of resources; 1 per cent of the banks of the country hold 75 per cent of the deposits. Another evidence is the growth of the chain store—there just isn't anything that you can't buy now in a chain store, and there are communities where you can't buy anything outside one. A third evidence is the amazing volume of instalment buying. No one can say how great this volume actually is, but it dominates the greatest industry in the United States—far more than half the automobiles sold each year are sold on a deferred payment basis. These changes have affected our every day lives profoundly. They mean mass production, centralization of control, standardization of products and policies—powerful factors, each of them, in social no less than in industrial and mercantile organization. It was inevitable, it seems to me, that the newspaper should have been affected by these trends.

Still another change is coming in our economic practices. The commercial loan is a diminishing factor in the financing of business. Its place is being taken, apparently, by stock and bond issues, and now the newspaper security has made its appearance. In the past three years forty-eight newspapers in thirty-six cities have issued stocks and bonds for more than \$130,000,000. This total is exclusive, except in two instances where they were commingled, of loans for strictly real estate purposes. The figures embrace only the securities offered for public sale and that are

traded in on some public market. They include only newspaper issues; the securities covering magazines and other periodicals form an entirely separate classification.

These are impressive figures and they represent a major change. To an extraordinary degree the newspaper has been the product of individual endeavor. There was really a great deal of truth in the old formula for starting one—an itch to write and a shirttail full of type. From the days of Franklin and Bradford on down through the days of Bennett and Greeley and Medill and Pulitzer and Ochs it was one man's intensity and devotion and willingness to do the whole job, even if it took thirty hours a day, that made newspapers. Sometimes families and partnerships succeeded these founders, but always the distinctive, individual control was unmistakable. Rarely, until recent years, was there anything approximating company ownership. The financial structure was in keeping with these conditions, and financial dealings were on the old-fashioned basis of the personal equation.

On a place I know in Eastern Tennessee there was for years an old darky who was always on hand at hog-killing time, gratefully to receive a mess of jowls. One year he raised a bale of cotton and came into funds. He didn't appear at the big house, and the jowls that were set aside for him went elsewhere. A few days later he was asked where he had been.

"Well, I'll tell you, Miss Ella," he said, "jus' now I'se eatin' furdur back on de hawg."

The newspaper is eating much further back on the hog these days. It has become a billion dollar industry—this year (1929) income from sales and subscriptions will reach \$260,000,000, and from advertising it will go to \$800,000,000. It was inevitable that such a business should attract the attention of others than newspaper men. It was but natural that these, not being newspaper men, should look upon the newspaper from a different angle, oftentimes a very different angle. If you will examine the record you will find this group chiefly responsible for the consolidations that have reduced the number of our daily newspapers at an average rate of one every thirty-five days over the past eight years. Just now you will find this same group the most active and conspicuous among the chain owners.

WITH business men buying into the newspaper industry it was inevitable that ownership should be vested in corporations, and that these corporations should issue securities, as we have seen they have been issued. The trend of the times would have brought this about if nothing else did. I think it is quite beyond ar-

gument that this condition has imposed a new responsibility upon newspaper management. It is a responsibility that must be expressed in terms of earnings, of interest on bonds, of dividends on stocks. There are a thousand owners where there used to be but one or two. It is reckoned that the securities I have referred to are held by 50,000 people, which means that there are 50,000 owners of the forty-eight papers covered by these securities. These owners came in as investors, that is, for business reasons. I think you will agree that they are likely to be interested in results rather than in the means by which those results are achieved; it is only human that they should be. And it is only human that management should heed the new condition.

There is abundant evidence that this condition is being heeded. I am speaking literally when I say that how much money a newspaper makes has become news, and you will find it played as such in its own columns. How much money a newspaper must make is even more important. Here is a typical instance. The *Chicago Daily News* four years ago issued \$8,000,000 of 6 per cent debentures to cover the purchase of the property from the Lawson estate. It has 60,000 shares of 7 per cent cumulative preferred stock outstanding, and 400,000 shares of common. It provides \$250,000 a year for a sinking fund, so that now it has only \$7,000,000 of debentures outstanding. Interest on these debentures call for \$420,000 a year and dividends on the preferred stock for \$420,000, which with the \$250,000 for the sinking fund makes a total of \$1,090,000. For the five years immediately preceding the issue the net profits of the *Daily News* averaged a few dollars less than \$1,500,000. These new *fixed* charges, then, require 75 per cent of the net profits before any provision may be made for common stock dividends or any of the other demands resulting from the change in organization. All the old obligations remain, payrolls, materials, replacements; these charges are additional. I have examined a number of the issues and I find that the new fixed charges in no instance amount to less than one-third the net earnings. Thought *must* be given to these requirements; in giving this thought how can there fail to be a shift in emphasis to the business side?

This emphasis on the business side is not wholly a new thing, of course. We have had it with us in many places for many years. It is revealed in such things as the sometimes astonishing turnover among editors and business managers in certain groups, notably the Hearst group. There have been frank admissions of it, as when E. W. Scripps turned over his already great properties to Roy W. Howard and Robert P. Scripps. "I'll give you two," he said, "small

salaries and a big slice of the earnings. Whatever you make you've got to make out of the properties." The emphasis is not new but it is being given a new accent, and in many quarters where it was not to be found before.

One other striking development has come in newspaper affairs that may or may not be connected with the things we have been discussing. For the time, at least, growth in daily newspaper circulation has slowed down to the point of cessation. From 1921 to 1928 total circulation increased 10,000,000, the morning papers adding 50 per cent and the evening papers 35 per cent. Then came an abrupt change and from an average yearly increase of nearly 1,500,000 the increase in 1928 was less than 6,000. This was an astonishing reversal, and some observers are prepared to believe that saturation has been reached and that from now on we may see circulation growing only as population grows. So far this year the indications are that there will be no material change from 1928. I know of no situation more worth our watching. No one, I suppose, can foresee what the consequences will be if it continues. My guess is that it will mean still more consolidation. Almost certainly it will put a new edge on competition. The newspaper that is not content with what it has now may be faced with the necessity of going after, and getting as best it may, what share it may of the circulation of its fellows. Failing that, it may be under the necessity of driving still more vigorously after new business. Either way, surely, new problems will face the editorial end.

It has been from the editorial point of view that I have been looking at these matters; I think I should find it difficult under any circumstances to take any other post of observation. Sigma Delta Chi is an editorial fraternity—it ought to be our concern to know more than the merely superficial aspects of our work. Have you ever reflected upon the reluctance of the newspaper man to look objectively upon himself and his calling? It is a common and dangerous failing.

I have sought to suggest some of the things that may be. I am not pretending to prophesy whether they will prove good or bad. I do say that with them may come utterly different demands upon us, different functions, different ends to our endeavors. I believe that the event rests in our hands. There may be abilities in the newspaper of tomorrow that far transcend those of the newspaper of yesterday and today. Let us be prepared for them; let us not permit them to come upon us unawares; let us not stand by as they may be put to unworthy uses. I believe it is one of the ordinations of Sigma Delta Chi to meet the problems of the future no less than the problems of the present.

"Journalism Had Done Its Work—"

(Continued from page 5)

more promise of a complete restoration of understanding and confidence between your country and ours. The personal intercourse of Europe's most responsible statesmen has saved European civilization since the war. Why not adopt the practice between Britain and America at least long enough to determine the broad lines of a permanent British-American accord!"

"Mr. Baldwin, looking deeply interested, leaned back in his chair and smoked silently for perhaps a minute. Then he said:

"I should love to see the President and go over everything of interest to our two peoples, laying all cards face up on the table."

"May I say that to the President?" I asked.

"Yes. Say that without reserve. The issues are so important that I think a perfectly frank interchange of views of the greatest moment. I should go not for any specific purpose, not to settle anything, but merely to talk and seek light. Hard as it would be for me to get away from this place, if I am again prime minister after the present elections, and if the President indicated that he really would be glad to see me, I should do my utmost to go."

AFTER this dramatic interview Mr. Bell cabled Mr. Hoover—and his editors in Chicago. And in his diary he wrote that night, "I think it probably was my greatest day in international affairs—the matter is so big."

That the matter did prove "big" is borne out by later events. Unfortunate for Mr. Baldwin he was defeated in the ensuing elections and therefore the great Tory was denied the privilege of making the promised visit to America. Bell was not daunted. He sounded out several great London figures, notably Lloyd George. The war-time premier was not favorable to the plan. The fiery Welshman was simply not of the times. He was too ready to see dangers—chiefly for Britain.

Bell sought out M. de Fleuriau, the French ambassador to London. He whole-heartedly endorsed the idea. In fact he thought it a capital plan—this informal discussion of mutual problems between the two powers. Ambassador Matsudaira, the Japanese envoy, concurred in the Frenchman's view. Both thought a conversation would be helpful. Then came the presentation of the proposal to Ramsay MacDonald, newly elected prime minister.

"At this point in the chain of incidents," wrote Mr. Bell, "Constantine Brown, London correspondent of the *Daily News*, assumed an active role. He knew all the leading members of the triumphant Socialist-Labor

party—MacDonald, Snowden, Thomas, Thomson, Henderson—all of them. Without the loss of an hour, Mr. Brown reached Prime Minister MacDonald through Lord Thomson and put the question:

"Will you do what your predecessor was ready to do—go to Washington for a conference with President Hoover?"

"About 5:00 o'clock in the afternoon of June 4, I was writing in my room in the Carlton hotel when the telephone rang. Lord Thomson was at the other end of the wire. He wished to know if I would come across Pall Mall to the United Service club at once to see him. In less than ten minutes Lord Thomson was saying:

"I am authorized by Premier MacDonald to tell you that if President Hoover invites the prime minister to visit Washington there will be an acceptance of the invitation within twenty-four hours."

Thus was the victory won. And in significant words Bell sums up in his cryptic way his own great achievement:

"Journalism had done its work; statesmanship took over."

What lasting results are gained at the London conference of the five powers—what new devices for the furtherance of peace among nations are forged—is all problematical. But no criticism of the Bell triumph—for such it is and shall remain—obtains. His achievement stands a *magnum opus* in world understanding, a highwater mark in Anglo-American journalistic annals.

Why Washington Leads

One good reason why the University of Washington chapter of Sigma Delta Chi was awarded the professional achievement trophy at the Missouri Convention is that its members practice journalism while they're training for the profession. Undergraduate members now employed on Seattle publications are: Doug Wilcox and Irvin Blumenfeld, reporters on the *Seattle Post-Intelligencer*; Willard Bergh, sports writer on the *P. I.*; Dick Macfarlane, campus Associated Press correspondent; Milt Bona, correspondent for the *Seattle Star* and the United Press; Art Nelson with the *Pacific Builder and Engineer*; Berne Jacobsen, Northwest Editor of the *Seattle Journal of Commerce*; Tom Barnhart, assistant instructor in journalism at the University; James Hutcheson, campus reporter for the *Seattle Times*; and Wesley Farmer, assistant editor of the *Rainier Valley Herald*, community weekly.

"With Sigma Delta Chi Afeld" has been omitted this month for space reasons. Expect it back in March.

Newspaper Work and Writing

(Continued from page 2)

Will Irwin, Irvin Cobb, Richard Harding Davis, George Patullo, G. K. Chesterton, and hosts of others. If any man thinks newspaper work dulls the imagination, I would suggest that he read a book published a few months ago, entitled 'The Curious Lottery,' written by a friend of mine who for many years has been representative of the New York Times in Moscow. His name is Walter Duranty.

"When I was a cub reporter in Chicago there were a lot of other chaps chasing fires and making the rounds of the police stations with me. Some of their names may be familiar: Bob Casey, whose last book, 'The Seven Faces of Siva,' seems to be a success, and whose detective stories are appearing everywhere; Wallace Smith, who writes for the *Cosmopolitan*; Harry Hansen, Book Editor of the New York *World* and *Harp-er's*; and Floyd Gibbons, whose imagination ran riot recently in a book called 'The Red Napoleon.' At the desk next to me sat a youngster named Ben Hecht. If newspaper work has dulled his imagination, I wonder how one would account for his 'Gargoyles,' 'Eric Dorn,' etc. On the other side sat Mary Synon, who since then has become one of the best short story writers of our time."

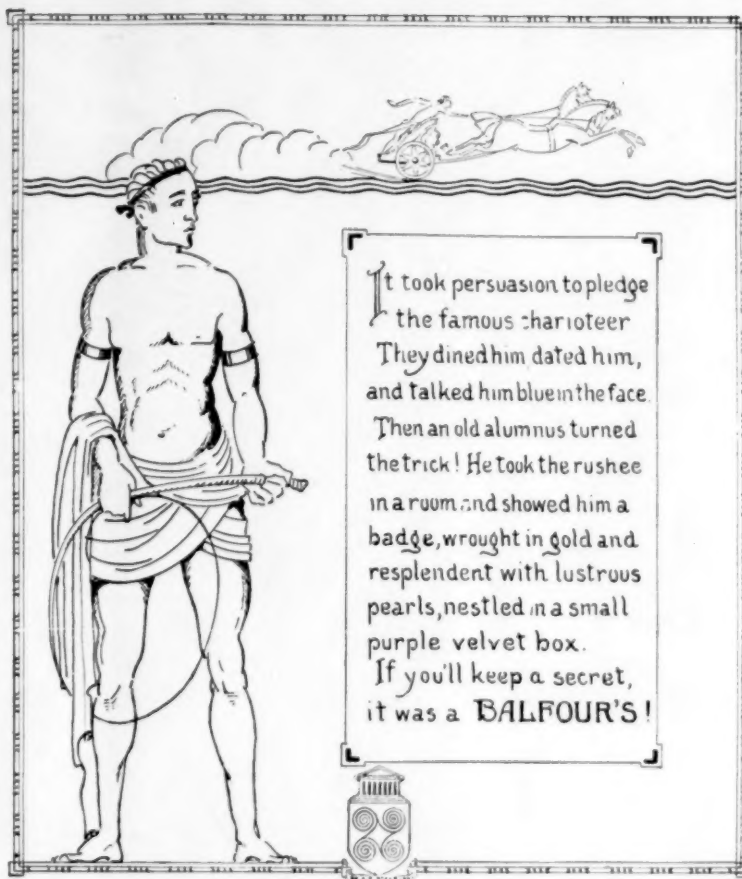
To all this Kenneth Gilbert (reporter and later city editor of the Seattle Times, author of numerous short stories and longer works, whose nature fiction is considered to be of exceptionally high rank) adds modestly:

"Certainly newspaper work was a stepping-stone to my literary career. Or, rather, it was a short-cut past the morass of inexperience. It taught me much—how desired effects may be infallibly achieved, for instance; and it developed rather than dulled my feeling for the dramatic. As to exposing the immature reporter to more experience than he can absorb, no man can ever hope to absorb fully and understand all of life's experiences, whether he is newspaper man or ditch digger. The richer experiences of a reporter should cause his imagination to flower as it would under no other condition. And he should come closer to knowing Life—and he must know it to write arresting fiction—than if his outlook is limited and his contacts with the great under-currents of human impulse are few."

"The reporter who cannot see beyond the bald facts of a story belongs at the copy desk or with some news-gathering agency where colorless brevity is the inflexible rule. The finest encouragement I had in my cub days was a chance-heard remark of the city editor, 'Gilbert always tries to make a feature of every story.' Ever after I regarded him as a gentleman of vast and intelligent discernment. I feel now that if I had not invariably looked for the dramatic side I should have found it very difficult to create fiction."

"Slovenly writing was never condoned by my newspaper bosses, nor by myself when I became a newspaper executive. Slovenly writing is a bug-bear that every fiction writer not headed for the nearest exit fears, no matter what his early training."

"No man can judge the later worth of contemporary writing. The 'enduring' work of Shakespeare, Poe, and Stevenson, for example, was regarded by them as of the 'pot-boiler' type. There is no saying whether contemporary fiction that will endure is coming from the drab, groping realists or the sprightlier romanticists. Journalism has less to do with it than the size of the author's hat."



It took persuasion to pledge
the famous charioteer
They dined him dated him,
and talked him blue in the face
Then an old alumnus turned
the trick! He took the rushee
in a room and showed him a
badge, wrought in gold and
resplendent with lustrous
pearls, nestled in a small
purple velvet box.
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it was a BALFOUR'S!

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During the past year there was a marked increase in the number of Sigma Delta Chi men placed in good positions through the efforts of the Personnel Bureau. More and more inquiries for men with journalistic training and experience are being received all the time. Employers have found they can depend on the service of the Personnel Bureau, and as a result its reputation is growing and spreading with each new contact.

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November 3, 1929.

To the Director of the Personnel Bureau:

You will recall that a brother Sigma Delta Chi sent me a bureau registration form last June and informed me that he was paying my enrollment fee as a graduation present, by way of acquainting me with the true value of membership in Sigma Delta Chi.

That favor proved to be the biggest boost I ever received. Thanks to my fellow member's thoughtfulness and to the bureau's excellent service, I have obtained a position quite to my liking—one that already bids fair to advance me faster than I had dreamed would be my lot.—W. E. E.

New and bigger openings are going to break for Sigma Delta Chi men right along. Why wait for the right position to seek you out when you can go out and meet it by availing yourself of the services of the Personnel Bureau? Enrollment fee is \$1.00. For information write TODAY to

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